



McCarthy-Towne Bulletin

January 4, 2013
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January is Looking Forward

by David Krane, McT Principal

Happy New Year! Although it's been cold and blustery outside during this past break, it's been a perfect time to spend inside with the warmth of gathered family. At our house, this is the time of year when all of us are at home, glad to spend some time catching up and reconnecting.

January is also a time to think about the upcoming year, especially as we begin to get ready to put our school on display. School communities use the past as a reference and as a preparation for what's next. Here at McCarthy-Towne, we are getting ready to present ourselves to the community at large as we prepare for the upcoming Kindergarten tours. School choice, a special component of public education here in Acton, compels all of us to stay mindful of our school mission and of our unique way of working with the children and families who choose our school. Preparing for the tours encourages us to reflect on what has worked so well in the past and also to consider the changes we might want to make in the future to support our mission.

Acton has high expectations for all the schools in town. Each of the five elementary schools works very hard and succeeds in meeting those expectations. Any one of

these five schools would be an excellent choice for incoming Kindergarteners and their families. But what we offer here is very different. The integration of the visual arts into the curriculum across the grade levels begins in Kindergarten and becomes a huge part of the student learning process as kids grow through the school. Also, ours is an environment that is about risk-taking, cooperation, and problem solving. It is a place that seeks to have families assume active roles in the school. This is part of what makes us unique in Acton and, indeed, in public education.

The pride that the faculty and staff and children take in being part of McCarthy-Towne is apparent everywhere one looks. The walls display student work, completed and still in process. Conversations in the classrooms are as lively and engaging as they are in the staff room! Families are an active part of the school through the School Council and a variety of committees. Active, community and committed are words that describe our school. This is the school we proudly invite prospective families and children to be part of as they tour the McCarthy-Towne School.

Here's to a great year ahead!

McT Mileage Club

The McT Mileage Club met on Friday mornings to walk, jog, and run laps in the recess area. Students tracked their laps on mileage charts and received a foot token at various intervals along the way. We ended our first season in December. Here are some of the impressive numbers from this new McT program:

- 46 students on average came to the McT Mileage Club.
- 91 students participated in at least one Mileage Club session.
- 20 students attended every session this fall.
- McT Mileage Club members logged a total of 749 miles this fall.

Outdoor sessions will begin in the spring. Until then, Dave James will be organizing an indoor exercise option during the winter months beginning in late January. To receive e-mail updates on either of these programs, please contact Chris Hanlon (hanlonchristopher@hotmail.com). Special thanks to Deb and John Aiello, Rob Bukowski, Michele Caterina, Carol Chytil, Elizabeth Crowley, Jill Defoe, Dave James, Kim Moran, Dan Niemann, Tracey Smith, Mariah and Matt Straayer, and Cathy Yu for their help and dedication.

Mark Your Calendar

JANUARY

4-17

Lost & Found Fair

10, Thursday

McT Community Assembly

16, Wednesday

Scrip Orders due

21, Monday

NO SCHOOL,

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

22, Tuesday

Kindergarten Changeover
(AM/PM Switch)

Priority Kindergarten
Registration at R.J. Grey
Junior High School,
9 AM-Noon and 7-9 PM

23, Wednesday

Priority Kindergarten
Registration at R.J. Grey
Junior High School,
9 AM-Noon

PTSO Meeting, 7 PM
Faculty Lounge

31, Thursday

McT Winter Band Concert

FEBRUARY

7, Thursday

Community Assembly

13, Wednesday

Early Literacy Fundraiser
at Willow Books, 6-8 PM

14, Thursday

PTSO Meeting, 9:30 AM
Multi-Purpose Room

18-22

NO SCHOOL, Winter Recess



from Kate Murray and Tracey Smith, PTSO co-chairs

Welcome back and Happy 2013! As we settle back in to our routines, the PTSO is back in action wanting to make sure you know about three very important events coming up.

First, The United Way is thrilled to have **Chris Herron coming to speak to the Acton/Boxborough community, on Wednesday, January 9 at 7 PM** in the ABRHS Auditorium. Mr. Herron is an ex-Celtic player and the author of "Basketball Junkie" the story of basketball, addiction and the road back. He tells a compelling story and we encourage parents to attend this evening, as Mr. Herron helps to educate parents/guardians about some of the dangers our children face as they head in to adulthood.

Our next **PTSO meeting will be Wednesday, January 23 at 7 PM** (please note this change of day from our original schedule) in the second floor staff room here at McT. During this meeting, we will be having a presentation by David Krane and several of our teachers and specialists on how we assess, measure and track student achievement at McT. Please plan to attend and come with your questions!

The **McT Auction is coming on Saturday, March 9!** Please book your babysitter now as you will not want to miss this great event.

We hope you all had a relaxing vacation and we look forward to seeing you at some of these upcoming events!

Reminders From the Office

Checking in with the Office When visiting the school please remember to stop in the Office to sign-in and take a name tag before heading to wherever you are volunteering/visiting. Staff in the building will send you back to the Office if they do not see you wearing a name tag. Also please remember when exiting the building to use the front lobby doors only.

Front Circle Please remember that driving into the front circle during school hours is strictly prohibited. The front circle is used by both McCarthy-Towne and Merriam children for recess and other outdoor activities in all weather. For the safety of all students and staff, please do not drive into the front circle under any circumstances during school hours, including bus arrival and dismissal.

Lost & Found Fair: January 4-17

Starting on Friday, January 4, all lost and found items will be on display in the lower level of the Parker Damon Building. The items will be there until Thursday, January 17 so please come and check for any items that may have gone missing during the last few weeks. There are many jackets, coats and lunch boxes. All items that remain after the fair will be donated to charity. Contact Mary Beilman (mmorgank@aol.com) or Petra Charisse at (pecharisse@gmail.com) if you have any questions.

2013-14 School Calendar

The School Committee has approved the 2013-14 school calendar. It can be downloaded at www.ab.mec.edu/about/aboutpdf/2013-2014calendar.pdf.

Story Time at Willow Books with McT Teachers and Staff



Come to Willow Books in Acton on Wednesday, February 13 from 6-8 PM and enjoy stories read by many of your favorite teachers and staff. The exact times for each reader will be sent out via email through the McT Howler.

This is a terrific and fun event that directly benefits our youngest literacy learners (this is NOT a PTSO fundraiser). **Willow Books will generously donate 15% of all sales during this Story Time event directly to Sharon Ryan's "Teachers and Families as Literacy Partners" seminars for support materials.**

Sharon Ryan, McT's Reading Specialist, will again be providing seminars entitled "Teachers and Families as Literacy Partners" this spring for both incoming Kindergarten parents and parents of current Kindergartners moving on to 1st grade. These seminars will provide parents with resources and skills to use over the summer to nurture literacy in their children. The program will include enjoyable and engaging literacy materials for each family to take home and use over the summer and throughout the year. This exciting evening, hosted by Willow Books, will help to fund these literacy seminars and the fun take-home materials. Thank you in advance for helping our youngest literacy learners.

Please contact Sharon Ryan (sryan@abschools.org) with any questions about the Willow Books event or the literacy seminars.

Calling All 4th Grade Families!

Parents of this year's 4th grade class will be joining forces to sell snacks during the Community Ed basketball games as a fundraiser for NEXT year's 5th grade Merrowvista field trip. Snack sales will take place in the Parker Damon gymnasium on Saturdays from January through March. For those who are unfamiliar with this field trip, it is a three-day, two-night trip to the Merrowvista nature center located in New Hampshire. This is an amazing community-building trip and generally viewed as the highlight of 5th grade. Selling snacks during the basketball games will help establish a scholarship fund so that absolutely every 5th grader will be able to attend and it may even help reduce the overall cost for all families. Because this trip occurs in October of 5th grade, it's important that we start fundraising now!

Here's how 4th grade families can help: volunteer your time to help man the sales table during these Saturday games. Do you have a child playing basketball? Great—you'll be there anyway! If you're able to come before your child's game or stay longer after their game, you can work the table and help make your 4th grader's trip next year a great success. Kids are welcome to volunteer with their parents also and make this truly a community- and family-building event. The basketball season runs from Saturday January 5th until Saturday March 16th and we will be manning a table from 8 AM – 1 PM each Saturday. Whether you can only volunteer for one Saturday or you'd like to volunteer for a bunch, **please email Ginny Galletta (ggalletta@comcast.net) so she can put together a schedule for the season.**

McT ROCK 'N' ROLL AUCTION NEWS

CALLING ALL ROADIES!

If your list of New Year's resolutions includes getting more involved at our school (besides going to the gym and cutting carbs, that is), the McT PTSO has some great opportunities for you! Although this year's auction Committee is doing amazing work, what we really need is YOU! Below there are just a few positions that need to be filled immediately (or even sooner!).

Raffle Committee Chair: The raffle is a significant fundraising component of the auction. We need someone to coordinate volunteers to sell tickets for an hour or two at places like Roche Bros and Donelan's over two weekends. Someone will also be needed to keep track of ticket sales. The approximate time commitment is 10 hours spread out from January through early March.

Groupies: If chairing a committee still seems overwhelming, how about working as a Raffle Groupie? Sell raffle tickets in hour-long shifts at Roche Bros and Donelan's on two weekends preceding the auction—kids and friends are welcome and encouraged to help! A Groupie can also work the night of the Auction selling the 50/50 tickets and tickets for the gift bag table. Ideally, the time commitment is 10 hours spread out from January through early March but we will take ANY and ALL offers!

Please Help! If this sounds a bit desperate, that's GREAT! Please help us fill these positions! Tempted but afraid to go it alone? Don't worry! Make a resolution to overcome your fear, grab a buddy and take it on together!

DONATIONS—WHAT SHOULD YOU DONATE?

Donate Your Time: There are some immediate volunteer needs! For a full list with descriptions, please visit the auction website—www.mctptso.org/auction.

Donate Items: Auction items offered by our families in the past have included signed sports memorabilia, theater and concert tickets, beach and vacation house rentals, services such as interior design help, baked goods, parties, and personally designed crafts. Printable donation forms and a copy of last year's auction booklet are available at www.mctptso.org/auction. Donation forms are due Monday, February 8th. Please save your gently used items for our annual Spring Yard Sale.

WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?

Purchase: Specially designed Auction T-shirts, raffle tickets, tickets to the auction, etc.

Tell Your Friends: No need to shout it from the rooftops (that might help though!).

This is the 22nd year for the auction and it will take place on Saturday evening, March 9th, 2013 at the Stow Acres Country club in Stow, MA. For more information, please visit www.mctptso.org/auction or contact Jennifer Mabardy (jennifermabardy@comcast.net) or Lauren Richardt (laurenrichardt@yahoo.com).

Reading Corner

from Sharon Ryan, McT Reading Specialist

On behalf of the McT Reading Program, I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to the Friends of Acton Libraries for their generous \$275 grant! These funds will be used toward the McT Early Literacy Evenings slated for Spring 2013. Happy Reading!

Priority Kindergarten Registration

The Acton Public Schools offers Early Kindergarten Registration for "Priority Admission Candidates." Siblings of students currently enrolled in Acton Public Schools who will be five years old by September 1, 2013 are given priority registration status. Early registration will be held at R.J. Grey Jr. High School on Tuesday, January 22 from 9 AM–noon and 7–9 PM and Wednesday, January 23 from 9 AM–noon. For more information and registration forms please visit www.ab.mec.edu/kindergarten.shtml. Parents/guardians must bring a copy of your child's birth certificate/passport and most recent physical examination and immunization record.

2013 MCAS Schedule

Students in Grades 3, 4, 5 and 6 will be taking MCAS tests this spring. Please avoid scheduling trips and appointments during the MCAS testing periods. Testing begins at the beginning of the school day, so students should avoid late arrival to school. If they arrive after their class begins the test, they will not be able to take the test that day.

English Language Arts Reading Comprehension (Grades 3, 4, 5, 6)

Week of March 18

English Language Arts Composition (Grade 4)

Tuesday, March 19

(Make-Up Date: Thursday, March 28)

Mathematics (Grades 3, 4, 5, 6)

Week of May 6

Science, Technology & Engineering (Grade 5)

Week of May 13

Enter to Win an iPod® Shuffle PLUS \$500 in Free Groceries!



Remember to save your receipts from Donelan's Supermarkets! The *Register Tapes for Education Program* allows us to earn FREE school equipment just by grocery shopping. Send receipts in with your child or drop them at the McT office. Please do NOT cut your receipts. We must submit the entire receipt, showing the store name and location, as well as items purchased. **Receipts dated September 1, 2012–March 31, 2013 are eligible.**

Enter to win a \$500 grocery gift certificate PLUS an iPod® Shuffle. **Send the entry form below into school with your receipts by January 15, 2013.** Enter as many times as you like as long as your entry is submitted with a Donelan's receipt and the entry form is not photocopied. If you want to make copies, copy the entry form first and then hand write your information on each form. They will NOT accept entry forms that have been filled out and then photocopied. Please leave the "school code" section of the entry form blank. For complete contest rules, please visit www.registertapesforeducation.com/shoppercontest. If you have any questions about the program, contact Kate Hoitt (kjhoitt@verizon.net).



Register Tapes Entry Form

Please enter me for a chance to win a \$500 grocery gift certificate plus an iPod Shuffle®.

Name _____ School Code

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number (____) _____-____

➔ Please return to your school by January 15, 2013. ←